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**Emotion in the Workplace:  
The New Challenge for Managers**

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## **Emotion in the Workplace: The New Challenge for Managers**

### **Executive Overview**

Emotions in workplace settings, and especially emotional intelligence, are ‘hot’ topics in management today. Leading business journals, such as *Fortune* and *Harvard Business Review*, have recently featured articles on emotional intelligence. But there is more to emotions in the workplace than just emotional intelligence. The aim of this article is to acquaint managers with intriguing new research that examines both emotional intelligence and the broader issue of emotion, which has been shown to play a powerful role in workplace settings. We show that this research has a strong potential for practical application in organizations within many broad human resource functions such as selection, performance management, and training, as well as implications for more narrow domains like customer service. We conclude that the study of emotions in organizational settings has provided new and important insights into the way in which people in organizations behave, and we offer advice for managers to enable them to develop and to maintain a positive emotional climate in their organizations.

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Consider the following hypothetical vignette:

Ruth Alison is a sales clerk in a large department store. She works in the men's clothing and accessories department, where she has been for the last five years. Ruth is good at her job, and always manages to keep smiling, no matter how difficult clients become. This Monday, however, despite wishing her clients a "Good Day," Ruth is not really having a good day. It began even before she arrived at work. One of her children had awakened ill, and needed to be taken care of. Then, Ruth's workday began with a critical comment from Ruth's boss to Ruth about her contribution to the staff meeting before the store opening. Later, one of Ruth's colleagues failed to tell her about an alteration that needed to be done to a client's suit, resulting in a rather irate customer having to wait thirty minutes for the alterations to be completed. Then there was a rush of shoppers during the lunch hour and, with two clerks off sick, service had not been great. To top it off, Ruth's supervisor seemed to have decided to vent his own frustration by criticizing Ruth's handling of the rush, even though Ruth had managed to send every customer away happy. At the end of the day, Ruth had 'had it,' and was seriously considering looking for another job. She usually stayed after work to assist her less experienced colleagues finalize paperwork, but this day she felt in too much of a bad mood and went straight home, but not after first jamming the cash register drawer so that her colleagues would have great

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difficulty in rectifying the problem. Ruth would stay in a bad mood for the remainder of the week.

The scenario above, unfortunately, probably represents a snapshot of an all-too-common day at work for many of us, with its typical frustrations and daily hassles. Most people can recall a similarly hassled day, and the effect that it had on them. Indeed, the story is riddled with emotional content. How did Ruth manage to keep smiling at clients under the circumstances? Why was her supervisor so insensitive? Why did such minor occurrences lead Ruth to behave so erratically by the end of the day? Will Ruth's bad mood affect her performance for the rest of the week? We address these questions, and attempt to provide answers, based on recent research, throughout our discussion.

In recent years, emotions in the workplace, and especially emotional intelligence, has become somewhat of a 'hot topic' in management. Daniel Goleman's book on emotional intelligence was for a long time on the *New York Times* Bestseller List; and articles have appeared in *Fortune*, *Harvard Business Review*, *Time Magazine*, and the e-magazine *Salon*.<sup>1</sup> But there is much more to emotions than just emotional intelligence. In this article, therefore, as well as covering emotional intelligence, we discuss some of the more mundane, but no less important wider issues of managing emotions in organizational settings.

At around the same time that popular interest in emotions in organizations was galvanized with publication in 1995 of Daniel Goleman's *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can Matter More Than IQ*, academics were also becoming interested in the wider topic of

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emotions in the workplace.<sup>2</sup> In the past few years, the number of both popular and academic conferences, workshops, books and articles (including special issues of academic journals)<sup>3</sup> has virtually exploded, catapulting emotions into the mainstream of management scholarship. Indeed, all indications tell us that the issue of emotions in the workplace is shaping up as one of the principal areas of development in management thought and practice in the 2000's.

### **The 'Big Picture'**

We open our discussion with an introduction to Affective Events Theory (AET).<sup>4</sup> The importance of AET is that emotional states are seen to lie at the core of attitude formation and employee behavior in organizations. Further, according to this theory, it is mundane, everyday events like Ruth experienced that influence the way we think in reference to our jobs, our employers, and our colleagues. Ultimately, the emotional build-up can profoundly affect our behaviors. AET thus carries an important message to managers: *Emotions in organizational settings and the events that cause them are not to be ignored, even if they appear to be relatively minor.* The sorts of hassles that generate negative emotions include interactions with supervisors, peers, subordinates, and customers; and can occur both within and outside the organizational setting itself. The series of hassles experienced by Ruth Alison is typical of hassles experienced during the workday for many of us. By the same token, uplifts in workplace settings can come from the same sources as the hassles. Research has underscored the accumulative nature of hassles: it seems that people at work are capable of dealing with infrequent occurrences,

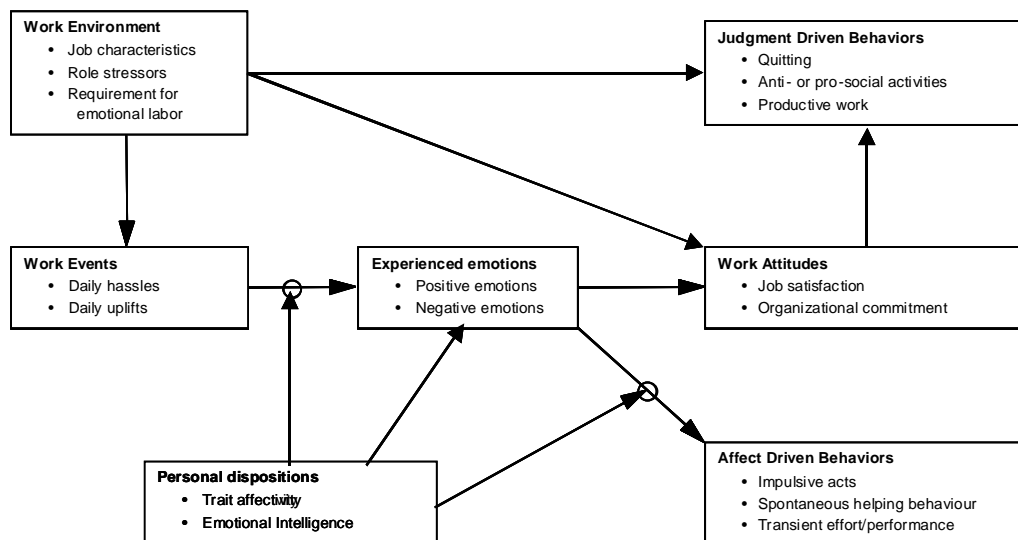
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even when these are relatively intense, particularly if they are buffered by uplifting events such as support by friends, family, and colleagues.<sup>5</sup> The situation is much worse if there is an unrelenting series of negative events. In effect, it is the *accumulation* of positive or negative events that determines how we feel and that, according to AET, subsequently determines the way we think and feel at work. Put simply, AET suggests to managers: “Pay attention to the emotional climate in your organization!”

AET can also be used as a diagnostic model for understanding how the organizational environment contributes to emotional climate and where that climate can lead (see Figure 1).



Below, we delve into one particular organizational emotional issue, that of emotional labor, which refers to managing emotions in the service of one's job. Then we

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discuss an individual emotional variable that has received a great deal of popular and scholarly attention, emotional intelligence, or understanding and managing the emotions of self and others. We chose these two concepts to illustrate the potential for managers to seize the 'emotional capital' in their organizations, using tools that provide them with 'emotional leverage'.

### **The 'Work' of Emotion Management**

Although emotions and managing emotions in the workplace have always been implicitly at the core of management practice and development,<sup>6</sup> research specifically on emotions in organizational settings is relatively recent. The earliest focused on emotional labor.<sup>7</sup> In our opening vignette, Ruth Alison suffered significant adverse effects arising substantially from job role expectations. These expectations were affirmed from at least four sources: Ruth's boss, Ruth's customers, Ruth's peers, and Ruth herself. Many jobs and occupations, particularly occupations involving service work, are characterized by strong norms and/or expectations regarding displays of emotion.<sup>8</sup> Explicit norms, embodied in recruitment strategies or included in job descriptions, can be seen everywhere (e.g.: "Now Hiring Smiling Faces"). Implicit norms may also exist, affecting how employees are socialized into the organization's culture (inviting the 'new kid' to join in the Friday evening after-work-drinks ritual); how jobs are valued, with service jobs traditionally devalued;<sup>9</sup> and even the means by which raises and/or rewards are distributed. For example *K Mart* gives *K Dollars* to employees 'caught' being nice to

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customers or to ‘secret shoppers’, and *Best Buy* gives employees smiley-face stickers to put on their nametags to represent particularly good customer service.

The stage for emotional labor was set in 1983 when Arlie Hochschild published her seminal work *The Managed Heart*. This book became a bestseller in its paperback edition,<sup>10</sup> and established the idea of *emotional labor*, or the act of managing emotion at work. Drawing from a series of observations and interviews with flight attendants and bill collectors, Hochschild described the emotionally draining process of managing one’s emotions in the service of a job or organization. Often, we are required to express an emotion that we simply do not feel, or even *not* to express one that we *do* feel. Ruth Alison demonstrated this when she smiled and wished the customers well, even when she was feeling dreadful. She also demonstrated emotion suppression, where anger, frustration, and resentment are bottled up, often resulting in counterproductive workplace behaviors (as in Ruth jamming the cash register before she left). Hochschild describes an incident where a flight attendant, angry at the rudeness of a passenger ‘accidentally’ spilled red wine on her.

### *Emotional Labor and Customer Service Performance*

We open with an acknowledgment that while we suspect that emotional labor is widespread in many organizations and jobs, most of the research to date has centered on customer service jobs. The need to manage one's emotions or express emotions contrary to one's true feelings characterize most jobs to some degree or another; yet customer service positions represent a particularly strong job situation where these needs are quite



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explicit and apparent. We know that customers' perceptions of service and the employees' attitudes are crucial: Positive attitudes expressed by employees can create favorable impressions in customers' minds, and negative attitudes can similarly engender unfavorable impressions.<sup>11</sup> When employees are seen by customers to be rude, or they behave inappropriately towards customers, an organization may lose in many ways. Not only may a direct sale be lost, but future revenue from both the offended customer as well as everyone she convinces to avoid patronage could also be lost. Further, while we know that positive outcomes are often associated with positive expression of emotion by employees, the full effects of positive and genuine emotional expression by employees can have far-ranging beneficial effects for their employers.<sup>12</sup> For example, in service settings we know that customer reactions and organizational outcomes, particularly sales, are indeed affected by how employees express their feelings.<sup>13</sup> Sometimes, the effects can be unexpected such as a finding that sales clerks' smiles were associated with the relaxed atmosphere of low-sales stores, rather than high sales stores. In busy, high volume stores, it seems that nobody has time to smile and to be sociable.<sup>14</sup> Recent research has also provided compelling evidence that customer *recovery* is strongly influenced by emotional expression of sales assistants, reflected in *customer delight*.<sup>15</sup> In sum, it is becoming increasingly clear that successful management of emotional labor by employees plays a critical role in the process of customer retention, recovery, and delight.

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These studies have demonstrated that there is a *matching effect* between employee and customer emotion, and underscore the potent influence that one person's emotional cues can have on another person's emotional states. In effect, people 'catch,' or are 'infected' by emotion from others. Thus this has become to be known as *emotional contagion*.<sup>16</sup> Emotional contagion clearly has exciting and intriguing potential implications for organizational application. This is especially the case regarding team dynamics, where one team member's poor (or positive) attitude may 'infect' others' attitudes, as well as impact the whole tenor of the team's project. Most of us can recall situations where this has occurred, where a type of group mood is created that can be very difficult to reverse. On a more positive note, it *is* the case that positive emotion can also lead to contagion effects in groups that can subsequently result in other positive outcomes. The practical implications of emotional contagion include possible training for leaders to display positive affect, as well as incorporating positive affect in organizational socialization and culture processes.<sup>17</sup> In our opening vignette, Ruth's demeanor is likely to infect her colleagues (already angry about the jammed cash register), and result in a decidedly downbeat response from her co-workers. This mood may be reversible if her manager, or even one of her colleagues were to act more cheerfully, perhaps by using humor.<sup>18</sup>

### *Emotional Labor and Effects on Employees*

Emotional labor can be particularly detrimental to the employee performing the labor, and can take its toll both psychologically and physically. Employees may bottle up

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feelings of frustration, resentment, and anger, which are not appropriate (like our friend, Ruth) to express.<sup>19</sup> These feelings result, in part, from the constant requirement to monitor one's negative emotions, and express positive ones. If unchecked, or not given a healthy expressive outlet, this can lead to a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and burnout.<sup>20</sup> As well, inhibiting emotion can lead to aversive physiological and physical outcomes. This occurs through a complex process that ultimately weakens our immune system. Adverse health outcomes that can result from non-expression of negative emotion include serious disorders such as hypertension and cancer,<sup>21</sup> and less serious but nonetheless potentially debilitating symptoms such as sleeplessness and fatigue.<sup>22</sup>

Of course, it may be different for different employees: some may be better equipped and/or skilled to perform emotional labor effectively and without adverse personal consequences.<sup>23</sup> In addition, outcomes may differ depending upon the *type* of emotional labor undertaken. For example, instead of expressing an emotion that she doesn't feel (emotional dissonance), the employee can attempt to change her mood to match the required emotional expression of the organization. When this is done successfully, for example by focusing on the positive events during the day, the resulting effect is positive rather than negative.<sup>24</sup> Emotional dissonance, on the other hand, is especially aversive for employees and manifests in health problems.<sup>25</sup> Further, employees experiencing emotional dissonance may not be able to disguise their true emotions successfully.<sup>26</sup> The detection by customers of inauthentic expression may, in

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turn, lead to even poorer perceptions by the customer of service quality, resulting in a downward spiral of poor service and increasing emotional labor.<sup>27</sup>

### *Practical Implications for Managers from Emotional Labor*

We draw conclusions and suggest implications from research in both customer service positions, as well as 'non-customer service' positions. First, managers need to be skilled at perceiving the emotional climate of their organization, both at the individual and collective level. Especially critical are signs that their employees are becoming emotionally trapped in a cycle of negative emotion, depression, and negative behavior. Noticing small signs of emotional disturbance such as mood swings or 'flat' emotion, or behavior which deviates from typical for that person (e.g., more drinking, less socializing) or from organizational norms ('acting out') may distinguish semi emotionally-skilled from extremely emotionally skilled managers. Through perception, a manager can assess a potentially disastrous emotionally taxing environment. Yet, the ability to perceive emotional climate appropriately precludes the more important ability to intervene effectively and preventatively. Some managers may not be aware of severe negative consequences (such as sabotage and employee burnout as with Ruth) from leaving situations to spiral down. Others may be aware, but may not have an idea of what they can do. Implications from emotional labor-filled jobs suggest that at a minimum, managers need to raise awareness. In our final suggestions at the end of the article, we underscore the importance of an 'emotional job diagnosis' to assess the emotional challenges inherent in a job or environment. Perhaps there may be some

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managers who are more skilled at emotional perception, or who have the ability to diagnose an environment where affective events are likely to cause problems for employees. These questions lead us to discuss the important concept of emotional intelligence.

### **Using Emotions 'Intelligently'**

Emotional Intelligence is a relatively recent concept, but it has important implications for the selection and performance management of employees in organizations. It has also generated a flurry of both research and applied activity and has captured the public spotlight, as we noted in the introduction to this article. In all of the recent advances in work on emotion in organizational life, this concept is arguably the one with the strongest dual interest by *both* academics and practitioners/consultants. Researchers are seeking conceptually to distinguish, to define, and to validate its relationship with important work attitudes and outcomes, while practitioners are seeking to maximize potential employee performance through identification, selection, and training of critical competencies involving the emotional abilities of their employees. Attesting to this dual interest is the abundance of books, consulting agencies, workshops, journal articles, conference papers/symposia, and organized networks of individuals where both practitioners and academics can turn to for discussion of intriguing questions and solutions to organizational problems.<sup>28</sup>

Goleman has made some dramatic claims for the importance of emotional intelligence, but to date there has been little empirical evidence to support these claims.

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Research is currently in the midst of empirical debate about the dimensions and competencies comprising emotional intelligence.<sup>29</sup> Most agree that emotional intelligence is a related, but distinct concept from other classic orientations of intelligence.<sup>30</sup> For example, some suggest that emotional intelligence is more narrowly composed of distinct abilities all related specifically to emotion, such as perception, identification, understanding, and management of emotion.<sup>31</sup> Others suggest that it is more broadly inclusive of critical competencies for effective social interaction such as empathy, time management, decision-making, and working in teams.<sup>32</sup> We view our mandate is to provide information about what has been demonstrated through research, while concurrently providing a snapshot regarding professional opinion and debate surrounding the concept. Thus, practitioners will be better equipped to choose definitions and tools that are both based on their own orientations as well as empirically sound. We make the following statements that we feel represent a 'safe' summary and integration of diverse views, and one that managers can feel confident about:

1. Emotional intelligence is distinct from, but positively related to other intelligences.
2. Emotional intelligence is an individual difference, where some people are more endowed, and others are less so.
3. Emotional intelligence develops over a person's life span and can be enhanced through training.

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4. Emotional intelligence involves, at least in part, a person's abilities effectively to identify and to perceive emotion (in self and others), as well as possession of the skills to understand and to manage those emotions successfully.

We discuss the following areas where emotional intelligence does appear to offer some valuable insights; specifically, in respect of leadership and teamwork.

### *Emotional Intelligence and Leadership*

The connection between emotional intelligence and leadership is intuitive. The dominant theories of leadership today are based on the ideas of charismatic or transformational leadership.<sup>33</sup> Transformational leaders project a vision that their followers accept and believe in, inspire and motivate their followers, stimulate their followers intellectually, yet at the same time provide individual consideration and succor to their followers.<sup>34</sup> Transformational leaders must first identify and communicate the vision, and then rally the followers around it. Clearly, transformational leaders who can recognize their own and others' emotions and manage them, would be more adept at the second aspect of 'rallying the troops.' Further, a leader who is able to 'read' her employees well, will be better equipped to intervene in emotionally challenging situations to provide individualized support and appropriate modeling. Thus, parallel to the emotional intelligence concept of emotional self-understanding, transformational leaders must also be in touch with their own feelings.<sup>35</sup> Transformational leaders must be empathetic toward their followers. In particular, when followers experience negative events, transformational leaders need to understand how their followers feel. In essence,

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transformational leaders need to have ability to inspire and arouse their followers emotionally. Followers, thus inspired, become committed to the leader's vision and, ultimately, to the organization.

There is, however, a 'dark side' to charismatic leadership.<sup>36</sup> In this sense, leadership can be manipulative and emotionally demanding, especially when followers are open to such exploitation.<sup>37</sup> The emotionally intelligent leader, alternatively, is also able to regulate his own and others' emotion, and to use emotional information in decision-making to achieve creative and positive outcomes. Such leaders are able to empathize with their followers. They can communicate their vision and enthusiasm, and also form positive and constructive relationships with their followers.<sup>38</sup> It is argued that emotional intelligence is an important catalyst of leadership. Specifically, emotional intelligence helps leaders to articulate team goals and objectives, to instill enthusiasm in members, to encourage flexibility, and to establish cooperation, trust, and identity within their work team.<sup>39</sup> Developing such emotional intelligence abilities in leaders would necessitate modeling, training, practicing, and rewarding desired behaviors. This implicitly rests on the assumptions of an emotionally healthy and supportive organizational culture and climate which we address below.

### *Emotional Intelligence and Teamwork*

Research to date has focused on emotional intelligence as an individual difference;<sup>40</sup> something akin to intellectual intelligence,<sup>41</sup> and associated with personal ability.<sup>42</sup> The concept of emotional intelligence, however, is wider in scope and



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application than its intellectual counterpart. For example, there is evidence that emotional intelligence contributes to more effective team functioning and performance, and thus we can conceive of the *emotionally intelligent team*.<sup>43</sup> Although studies of emotional intelligence are only just now emerging, we feel that there is reason to be cautiously optimistic, and suggest that there is evidence that emotional intelligence training may in the end prove beneficial.<sup>44</sup>

#### *In Summary of Emotional Intelligence*

In summary, although there are still issues to be resolved concerning emotional intelligence and its measurement, and managers need to be aware of the pitfalls of going with what many have described as a fad, there are some positive aspects of emotional management that are emerging, and that managers can use to their benefit. Most notably, emotional intelligence has positive implications for leadership and teamwork. Emotionally intelligent managers are able to ‘read’ the emotional climate in their organizations, and to understand the emotional concerns of employees. In the following section, we address some of the ways that managers can improve the emotional functioning of their organizations. In effect, in addressing the broader issues of emotions in organizations, we can offer advice on how managers can become more ‘emotionally intelligent’ within the broad meaning of this term.

#### **Helpful Strategies for Establishing an Emotional Healthy Organization**

So far in this article we have identified, through AET, that emotions are at the core of attitude formation and behavior in organizations, that emotional labor constitutes

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an important component of employees' everyday work life, and that the new construct of emotional intelligence may hold the key to employees' and managers' ability to deal with emotions in the workplace. We conclude therefore that management of emotions in organizations must now be seen to be an important tool in every manager's kit, and one that managers will increasingly need to pay attention to in the future.

In our opening vignette, we presented a day in the work life of Ruth Alison. It is likely that everyone who reads this article has experienced similarly frustrating days in his or her workplace. The result is inevitably anger and a bad mood, very likely accompanied by a deterioration in some work behaviors and attitudes. We ask readers to ponder how they would have handled Ruth Alison in our opening vignette. This question underscores a necessity for strategies that address *individuals* and their emotional arena. Further, we know that a negative emotional climate in an organization can stymie organizational and individual growth. Thus, this necessitates strategies for dealing at the *collective* level of emotional environments. We identify four preventative and three restorative techniques, addressing both individual and collective issues that managers can utilize to transform an *emotionally unhealthy* organizational environment into one that is *emotionally healthy*.<sup>45</sup>

### *Preventions*

1. *Assess the 'emotional impact' of jobs.* We hope that by raising awareness of the issues in this article, managers will be interested in what they can do to both facilitate positive effects of workplace emotion, as well as prevent negative effects.

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We suggest first a quick diagnosis of the job or jobs in question regarding the emotional challenge inherent in the job. Does this job require high emotion management skills of employees? Is this a reasonable aspect of the job? For example, job expectations like "always smile" may simply be unreasonable and part of the problem. If the job necessarily is extremely emotionally challenging (e.g., a nurse in the cancer ward of a children's hospital), then the manager needs to think proactively regarding ways to buffer these challenges.

2. *Create a positive and friendly emotional climate through modeling.* Remember the old adage, "Children learn what they live"?<sup>46</sup> Managers should model healthy emotional expression, which includes: attention to emotion perception in the workplace ("Stan, I notice that you seem anxious about this proposal. What can be done to address your anxieties?"); warm and sincere expressions of positive emotion; and constructively assertive and appropriate expressions of negative emotion. Leaders should attempt to be as genuine as possible when expressing emotion, and honest in their communication about it. As an example, imagine a leader in a company that is being threatened with a hostile takeover. We suggest that in this situation it would be appropriate for leaders to acknowledge that they are fearful and that it is okay for employees to also be fearful ("I'll be honest here. I'm scared about what may happen. How about you? How are you feeling about this?"). Leaders have a great challenge in walking the tightrope between expressing and encouraging healthy emotional expression (as opposed to many

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corporate cultures that encourage burying or suppressing emotions), and letting 'emotions run rampant' inappropriately.

3. *Encourage a positive emotional climate through rewards and compensation systems.* Research tells us that managers must make sure that reward policies in organizations must be designed so that desired behavior is rewarded, while undesired behavior does not attract rewards.<sup>47</sup> This advice applies here. If managers want a positive emotional climate and employees, then they should reward this behavior. AET tells us that simple comments such as “I really appreciate your positive, upbeat attitude; it goes a long way toward making this a pleasant place to come to work!” can have a powerful impact. A stronger message may be for managers to include expectations and behaviors regarding emotional expression explicitly into evaluation and compensation systems. Regardless, if managers don’t encourage and reward positive emotions, ‘it just ain’t gonna happen!’
4. *Select employees and teams based, in part, on a positive emotional attitude.* It goes without saying that the health of an organization depends upon its employees, which depends, ultimately, on the selection processes the organization uses. We advocate collecting multiple sources of data about prospective employees regarding their emotional outlook and attitudes. Relevant information can, for example, be gleaned from a well-conducted, semi-structured interview with behavioral questions.<sup>48</sup> An example would be: “Tell me about a time when you had to change

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the emotional ‘tone’ of a group of people. What was the situation? What led up to it? How did you accomplish this?” Further converging evidence can be solicited by calling the person’s references (what a concept!?) and asking targeted questions about the applicants’ ability to inculcate positive emotional tone in his or workmates.

5. *Train employees in emotional intelligence skills and healthy emotional expression.*

Mark Twain once said, “When angry, count to ten. When very angry, swear.”

While this was tongue-in-cheek, recent research tells us that it has more than a grain of truth to it.<sup>49</sup> While we don’t advocate encouraging employees to swear when they are angry, we do believe that training should include strategies for appropriate outlets for anger on the job (e.g., taking a 5-minute break; deep breathing), as well as teaching employees how to express positive emotion genuinely through visualization and ‘deep acting’ strategies,<sup>50</sup> and through expressing empathy. Finally, training should also address how employees can effectively identify and deal with emotional burnout if they inadvertently end up there. Taking an extended leave of absence, relaxation training, meditation, exercise, and counseling are all proactive behaviors an employee should be aware of.

*Restorations*

6. *Organizational level: Culture change.* For executives really serious about establishing a positive, healthy emotional organizational environment, drastic

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measures may need to be taken. Transformational leadership (discussed earlier) strategies can be modified to reflect an emphasis on healthy emotional expression, and recognize that this may be more difficult for some executives than others. Leaders need to establish and communicate an 'emotionally healthy' vision. Examples include: "We strive to maintain an atmosphere where customers and employees feel comfortable airing grievances and rest in the knowledge that their concerns will be given serious consideration;" and "Our goal is to provide an emotionally healthy workplace atmosphere where emotional challenges of the job are recognized, discussed, and managed in a way that simultaneously serves our customers well while also allowing employees voice in the process." Leaders also need to be skilled at utilizing charismatic behaviors such as emotional language to 'rally the troops': "Hey...you all seem drained. What can we do to reinvigorate this team?!" Finally, leaders and managers should be willing to take risks such as explicitly rewarding positive emotional climates. Rewards for positive attitudes which may be difficult to 'objectively' identify (which is why it is risky) are an example here.

7. *Job level: Environmental and job change through job re-design.* At the job level, some environments and/or jobs may need to be re-designed to encourage appropriate emotional management. For example, at the Ritz Carlton hotels, employees are empowered to do "whatever is necessary" (within quite expansive financial limits) to take care of an unhappy customer. By giving employees more

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autonomy regarding what to do about an angry customer, for example, managers can communicate trust and responsibility to employees in a way that we know improves their work attitudes and behaviors.<sup>51</sup>

8. *Individual level: Individual change through targeting training, punishment, re-assignment, or firing.* Of course, there are always going to be those ‘problem’ employees. As we know that negative emotions can be ‘contagious,’ managers may have to deal at times with employees if they are the root cause of a negative climate. We suggest a progressive process (much like any other performance problem would follow) whereby managers first communicate the problem and try to help the employee through training. It is critical, like with any other performance issue, to establish clear goals and expectations, and a timeline for expected improvement. If this is not successful, a more negative consequence should follow such as punishment (e.g., withholding a raise), and/or re-assignment into a job requiring little social interaction. Finally, if all else fails, the offensive employee should be advised that his or her future lies elsewhere. If the problem employees are not dealt with, it sends a contradictory message throughout the organization confusing employees and customers alike, and can ultimately affect the ‘bottom line.’

In conclusion, we hope we have convinced readers that emotion and emotion management are critical in the workplace. We believe that we are 'at the tip of the iceberg' in our understanding of just how intense and long-lasting are the effects of

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workplace emotional challenges. The recent events in the US on September 11, 2001, have thrust emotions to the forefront of both individuals' as well as corporations' lives. Fear, anger, pride, sadness, emotional solidarity...how do we cope? How do managers help their employees cope? What is appropriate? We don't claim to have the 'right answers' to these questions. However, consistent advice to individuals has been to be honest, open, and communicate about what you're feeling. We believe this advice parallels the advice we give above for managers. Styles of organizational coping with employee emotion will predict both whether or not organizations capitalize on emotional challenges (e.g., increased customer service and organizational performance), as well as their ability to prevent negative outcomes (e.g., increased employee stress and burnout). Managers have a variety of tactics and strategies at their disposal, and it will take time to test and learn to use these strategies most effectively.



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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> See Druskat, V. U., & Wolff, S.B. 2001. Building the emotional intelligence of groups. *Harvard Business Review*, 79 (3), 80-; Fisher, A., & Goleman, D. 1998. Success secret: A high emotional IQ. *Fortune*, 138 (8), 293-; Gibbs, N. 1995. What's your EQ? *Time Magazine*, October 2: 60-; Goleman, D. 1998. What makes a leader? *Harvard Business Review*, 76 (6), 92-; Murphy Paul, A. 1999. Promotional intelligence. *Salon e-magazine*, <http://www.salon.com/books/it/1999/06/28/emotional/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Two seminal articles that appeared around this time were: Ashforth, B. E. & Humphrey, R. H. 1995. Emotion in the workplace: A reappraisal. *Human Relations*, 48: 97 – 125; and Weiss, H. M. & Cropanzano, R. 1996. Affective Events Theory: A theoretical discussion of the structure, causes and consequences of affective experiences at work. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 18: 1-74.

<sup>3</sup> Special issues of journals include: Fisher, C. D., & Ashkanasy, N. M. (Guest Eds.) 2000. Special Issue on Emotions in Work Life. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 21 (3); Fox, S. (Guest Ed.) In press. Special Issue on Emotions in Human Resources. *Human Resources Management Review*; and Weiss, H. M. (Guest Ed.) 2001. Special Issue on Emotions in the Workplace. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process*, 86 (1).

<sup>4</sup> Weiss & Cropanzano, op cit.

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- <sup>5</sup> Grzywacz, J. G., & Marks, N. F. 2000. Reconceptualizing the work-family interface: An ecological perspective on the correlates of positive and negative spill over between work and family. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5: 111-126.
- <sup>6</sup> For an illuminating history of emotions in the workplace, see Mastenbroeck, W. 2000. Organizational behavior as emotion management In N. M. Ashkanasy, C. E. J. Härtel, & W. J. Zerbe (Eds.), *Emotions in the Workplace: Theory, Research, and Practice*: 19-35. Westport, CT: Quorum.
- <sup>7</sup> There is a considerable literature dealing with emotional labor now. Seminal articles include: Van Maanen, J. & Kunda, G. 1989. "Real feelings": Emotional expression and organizational culture. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 11: 43 - 103; Rafaeli, A. & Sutton, R. I. 1987. Expression of emotion as part of the work role. *Academy of Management Review*, 12: 23 - 37; Rafaeli, A. & Sutton, R. I. 1989. The expression of emotion in organizational life. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 11: 1 - 42.
- <sup>8</sup> UCSF scholar Paul Ekman is the "guru of smiles", see Ekman, P., Friesen, W. V., & O'Sullivan, M. 1988. Smiles when lying. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54: 414 - 420.
- <sup>9</sup> Kruml, S. M. & Geddes, D. 2000. Catching fire without burning out: Is there an ideal way to perform emotional labor? In N. M. Ashkanasy, C. E. J. Härtel & W. J. Zerbe (Eds.), *Emotions in the Workplace: Theory, Research, and Practice*: 177-188. Westport, CT: Quorum
- <sup>10</sup> Hochschild, op. cit., *The Managed Heart*.

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<sup>11</sup> Pugh, D. In press. Service with a smile: Emotional contagion in service encounters.

*Academy of Management Journal*; Schneider, B., & Bowen, D. E. 1985. Employee and customer perceptions of service in banks: Replication and extension. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 70: 423-433; Schneider, B., Parkington, J. J., & Buxton, V. M. 1980. Employee and customer perceptions of service in banks. *Administrative Sciences Quarterly*, 25: 252-267.

<sup>12</sup> Pugh, op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Rafaeli & Sutton, op. cit. Expression of emotion; Rafaeli & Sutton, op. cit. The expression of emotion; Sutton & Rafaeli op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Rafaeli and Sutton dubbed this phenomenon “The Manhattan Effect”

<sup>15</sup> Rust, R. T. & Oliver, R. L. (2000). Should we delight the customer? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 28: 86-94.

<sup>16</sup> Hatfield, E., Cacioppo, J. T., & Rapson, R. L. 1994. *Emotional Contagion*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>17</sup> Sigale Barsade of Yale University demonstrated that positive contagion in a group setting leads to greater group cooperativeness, less group conflict, and positive perceptions of individual task performance. Barsade, S. G. 1997. The ripple effect: Emotional contagion in groups. Unpublished manuscript. Yale University; Barsade, S.G., Ward, A.J., Turner, J.D.F. & Sonnenfeld, J.A. 2000. To your heart’s content: A model of affective diversity in top management teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 45: 802-836.

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<sup>18</sup> Eisenhardt K. M., Kahwajy J. L., & Bourgeois L.J. 1997. How management teams can have a good fight. *Harvard Business Review*: 75 (4): 77-83.

<sup>19</sup> Hochschild. op. cit. *The Managed Heart*.

<sup>20</sup> See the following for evidence that emotional labor leads to burnout: Kruml, S. M. & Geddes, D. 2000. Catching fire without burning out: Is there an ideal way to perform emotional labor? In N. M. Ashkanasy, C. E. J. Härtel & W. J. Zerbe (Eds.), *Emotions in the Workplace: Theory, Research, and Practice*: 177-188. Westport, CT: Quorum; Grandey, A. 2000. Emotion regulation in the workplace: A new way to conceptualize emotional labor. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5: 95-110; Mann, S. 1999. Emotion at work: To what extent are we expressing, suppressing, or faking it? *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 8: 347-369.

<sup>21</sup> Grandey, op. cit.

<sup>22</sup> Schaubroeck & Jones op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Grandey, op. cit.; Tews & Glomb, op.cit.

<sup>25</sup> Grandey, op. cit.; Schaubroeck & Jones, op.cit.

<sup>26</sup> Ekman et al. op cit.; Mann, S. 1999. *Hiding what we feel, faking what we don't: Understanding the role of your emotions at work*. New York: Harper-Collins.

<sup>27</sup> Grove, S. J.; & Fisk, R. P. 1990. Impression management in services marketing: A dramaturgical perspective. In R. A. Giacalone and P. Rosenfeld (Eds.), *Impression*

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*management in the organizations*: 427-438. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum; Mann op cit.,

*Hiding what we feel*; Rafael & Sutton op cit., Expression of emotion.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Steve Hein's Emotional Intelligence website. : <http://eqi.org>;  
Emotional Intelligence Services (EI). <http://ei.haygroup.com>; Josh Freeman's "Six  
Seconds" site: <http://www.6seconds.org/>; the Consortium for Research on Emotional  
Intelligence in Organizations: <http://www.eiconsortium.org/>, and Neal Ashkanasy's  
"Emonet" site <http://www.uq.edu.au/emonet/>.

<sup>29</sup> For critical academic perspectives regarding the emotional intelligence construct and  
measurement, see: Ciarrochi, J. V., Chan, A. Y. C., & Caputi, P. 2000. A critical  
evaluation of the emotional intelligence construct. *Personality and Individual  
Differences*, 28: 539-561; Davies, M., Stankov, L., & Roberts, R. D. 1998. Emotional  
intelligence: In search of an elusive construct. *Journal of Personality and Social  
Psychology*, 75: 989-1015; Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. 1997. What is Emotional  
Intelligence? In P. Salovey & D.J. Sluyter (Eds.) *Emotional Development and  
Emotional Intelligence: Educational Implications*: 3-31. New York: Basic Books.

<sup>30</sup> For discussion of different kinds of intelligence, see Gardner, H. 1983. *Frames of  
mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books; Thorndike, E. L.  
1966. *Human Learning*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

<sup>31</sup> Mayer, J. D., Caruso, D. R., & Salovey, P. 1999. Emotional intelligence meets  
traditional standards for an intelligence. *Intelligence*, 27: 267-298; Mayer & Salovey,  
op. cit. Emotional intelligence and the construction.

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<sup>32</sup> Goleman, op. cit. *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*; Bar-On, R.

1997. *Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory: A Measure of Emotional Intelligence*.

Toronto, ON: Multi-Health Systems, Inc; Cooper & Sawaf, op. cit.

<sup>33</sup> Bass, B. M. & Avolio, B. J. (Eds.). 1994. *Improving Organizational Effectiveness: Through Transformational Leadership*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

<sup>34</sup> Bass, B. M. 1998. *Transformational Leadership: Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum; Bass, B. M. & Avolio, B. J. 1990. The implications of transactional and transformational leadership for individual, team, and organizational development. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 4: 231-272.

<sup>35</sup> Bass, op.cit. *Transformational Leadership*.

<sup>36</sup> Conger, J. A. 1990. The dark side of leadership. *Organizational Dynamics*, 19: 44-55.

<sup>37</sup> Weierter, S. J. M. 1997. Who wants to play "Follow the Leader"? A theory of charismatic relationships based on routinized charisma and follower characteristics. *Leadership Quarterly*, 8: 171- 193.

<sup>38</sup> Ashkanasy, N.M. & Tse, B. 2000. Transformational leadership as management of emotion: A conceptual review. In N. M. Ashkanasy, C. E. J. Härtel, & W. Zerbe, (Eds.) *Emotions in the Workplace: Research, Theory, and Practice*: 221-236. Westport, CT: Quorum Books.

<sup>39</sup> George, J. M. 2000. Emotions and leadership: The role of emotional intelligence. *Human Relations*, 53: 1027-1055.

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<sup>40</sup> Bar-On, op. cit.

<sup>41</sup> Mayer & Salovey, op. cit. The intelligence of emotional intelligence.

<sup>42</sup> Goleman, op. cit. *Emotional intelligence: Why it Can Matter More Than IQ*.

<sup>43</sup> Druscatt & Wolfe, op cit; Jordan, P. J., Ashkanasy, N. M., Härtel, C. E. J., & Hooper, G. S. In press. Workgroup emotional intelligence: Scale development and relationship to team process effectiveness and goal focus. *Human Resource Management Review*.

<sup>44</sup> Jordan et al., op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> For an illustration of the importance of positive emotional climate, see Tsai, W. C. 2001. Determinants and consequences of employee displayed positive emotions. *Journal of Management*, 27: 497-512

<sup>46</sup> See also Goleman, op cit., *Emotional Intelligence*.

<sup>47</sup> Boettger, R. D., & Greer, C. R. 1994. On the wisdom of rewarding A while hoping for B. *Organization Science*, 5: 569-582

<sup>48</sup> For more on behavioral interviews, see Motowidlo, S. J., Carter, G. W., Dunnette, M. D., Tippins, N., Werner, S., Burnett, J. R., & Vaughan, M. J. 1992. Studies of the structured behavioral interview. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77: 571-587.

<sup>49</sup> For a discussion of catharsis in organizational settings, see Carr, A. 2000. Critical theory and the psychodynamics of change - A note about organizations as therapeutic settings, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 13: 289-299.

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<sup>50</sup> “Deep acting”, first discussed by Hochschild, op cit., involves learning to “get into character” by simulating feeling the appropriate emotion until one actually does feel the emotion.

<sup>51</sup> Research on the Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham, 1978) generally, and autonomy shows positive effects (greater job satisfaction, productivity, and motivation; less turnover and other withdrawal and counterproductive workplace behaviors) when employees are empowered.



Figure 1: Affective Events Theory

